**Children's Employment in Fireworks Industry**

2121. SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of LABOUR be pleased to state:

(a) the State in which maximum number of crackers and other fireworks items are manufactured;

(b) number of licensed and unlicensed factories working and for how many months in a year.

(c) number of times checking is carried out to see whether children are employed in this most hazardous business;

(d) number of prosecutions launched for employing child Labour; and

(e) the punishment given by courts in such prosecutions generally?

THE MINISTER OF LABOUR (SHRI M. ARUNACHALAM): (a) Tamil Nadu has the largest number of fireworks manufacturing units.

(b) Presently there are 440 factories licensed for manufacture of fireworks by the Department of Explosives. Manufacture of fireworks is licensable under the Explosives Rules, 1983 administered by the Department of Explosives. 394 factories are located in Tamil Nadu. These factories operate throughout the year except for a break after Diwali for a period extending from 7 days to one month. The factories situated in other states operate periodically according to the demand during festivals or other occasions. District authorities have the powers to license small manufacturing units as per the Explosives Rules. Manufacture of fireworks in unlicensed factories is unauthorised and illegal.

(c) Employment of children below the age of 14 in hazardous occupations (including the firework industries) is prohibited under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986. Department of Explosives conducts atleast one inspection of each of the factories during the year. The inspection is carried out with a view to ensuring observation of safety norms prescribed in the rules including employment of children. The State Administration also inspects these factories for checking the employment of children.

(d) According to the information received so far, 223 and 321 prosecutions were launched under the Child Labour (Prohibition & Regulation) Act, 1986 and the Factories Act, 1948 respectively in the country during 1995-96, for employing child labour.

(e) The courts generally give such punishment as are specified in the relavant Acts under which the employers are prosecuted.

**Shifting headquarters of Coal India Limited from Calcutta to Bihar**

2122. SHRI PARAG CHALIAH: Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have decided in principle, to shift the headquarters of Coal India Limited from Calcutta to Bihar; and

(b) if so, the circumstances which prompted the Government to do so?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF COAL (SHRIMATI KANTI SINGH): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise in view of the answer to part (a)

**Increasing import of Coal**

2123. SHRIMATI BASANTI SARMA:
DR. SHRIKANT RAMCHANDRA JICHKAR:

Will the Minister of COAL be pleased to state:

(a) what are the total coal deposits in India upto a depth of 1200 meters;

(b) when we have such huge deposits, is it proper to spend scarce foreign ex-